Strategies to Improve Basic *Tajwid* Mastery among Muslim Students at Politeknik Mersing

Nor Jannah binti Mohammad[1,a)], Siti Noor Marini binti As'ari[1,b)] and Siti Nazirah binti Mohd Paiman [1,c)]

[1]*Politeknik Mersing Johor, Jalan Nitar 86800 Mersing, Johor, Malaysia*

[a)]*Corresponding author: norjannah@tvet.pmj.edu.my*
[b)]*marini@tvet.pmj.edu.my*
[c)]*sitinazirah@tvet.pmj.edu.my*

Abstract. Many Muslim students today face challenges in reading the Quran with correct basic *tajwid* (rules of recitation). Some also have difficulty identifying the *hijaiyah* letters related to fundamental *tajwid*. Islam encourages its followers to read the Quran perfectly to ensure the validity of their prayers. This study aims to identify the level of mastery in Quranic recitation based on correct basic *tajwid* and to explore strategies to improve this mastery. The study's sample consists of 60 Muslim students at Mersing Polytechnic. A set of questionnaires was used as the research instrument and analyzed descriptively. Overall, the students showed a satisfactory level of *tajwid* mastery. The majority of respondents preferred the first strategy: understanding at least the main *tajwid* rules, specifically the rules of *nun saktah* and *tanwin*. Additionally, they prioritized consistent and scheduled daily or weekly Quranic reading to further enhance their basic *tajwid* skills. Some also chose to attend *tajwid* classes or courses to deepen their understanding of the subject. It is hoped that this study can serve as a guide for institutions and lecturers to provide appropriate teaching and learning, as well as programs and courses to improve students' basic *tajwid* skills, enabling them to achieve perfect Quranic recitation.

Keywords: Strategy, Basic *Tajwid* Mastery, Quranic Recitation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Many students find it difficult to read the Quran perfectly (Hassan Omar, 2019; Normawati Adnan, 2024). Among the common problems students face is a lack of skill in reading the correct length of *harakat* (vowel marks). They are also unsure about reciting verses that contain the small *sin* symbol (س) and the proper pronunciation of the *hijaiyah* letters. Furthermore, students lack confidence in their *tajwid* recitation due to confusion over specific rules, such as long and short vowels, and nasalization (*ghunnah*). Nevertheless, they constantly strive to learn through classes, recordings, and self-study. Some students also struggle to determine the correct vowel marks for verses beginning with *alif lam* and those involving *waqaf* (pausing). This leads to imperfect Quranic recitation, as research shows that mastering *tajwid* knowledge enables individuals to be more careful and accurate in their recitation (Ashari, 2023).

In addition, a small number of students have a languid attitude and find it hard to set aside time to read and reflect on the Quran, which also contributes to their imperfect *tajwid* recitation. This issue must be taken seriously because a person who fails to recite the Quran correctly may perform imperfect prayers, particularly in the recitation of *Surah Al-Fatihah* and the final *tahiyyat*, which are mandatory parts of the prayer. Based on this scenario, a study is needed to identify the level of accurate Quranic recitation according to *tajwid* among students. Strategies must be developed to help students who have weak mastery of basic *tajwid*. This research is important as a guide for lecturers and institutions to provide appropriate teaching and learning techniques and to organize various courses and programs for students, making it easier for them to understand the basic rules of *tajwid*.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous studies have been conducted on the ability to read the Quran with an emphasis on *tajwid* knowledge. *Mad wajib* and *mad jaiz* are crucial components that determine the quality of Quranic recitation (Firmansyah et al., 2022; Laila et al., 2023; Hasibuan, 2022). Previous research indicates that mastering these basic *tajwid* rules not only enhances the clarity of pronunciation but also aids in understanding the context of the holy verses when recited during prayers and daily activities (Muhammad et al., 2022; Pradhana et al., 2023). Some studies have also shown that a tendency to make mistakes in applying these rules can lead to a change in the meaning of the verses being recited (Firmansyah et al., 2022). Systematic and structured *tajwid* instruction helps students recognize pronunciation differences that lead to different meanings (Firmansyah et al., 2022). For example, the use of nasalization (*ghunnah*) in the silent letter *mim* is a vital element in ensuring that the pronunciation of the letter adheres to the established rules, thereby preserving the authenticity of the Quranic recitation (Hasibuan, 2022).

The distinction between *mad wajib* and *mad jaiz* has also received attention in *tajwid* learning literature. The rule of *mad wajib* requires a specific and mandatory lengthening of a letter's pronunciation without exception, whereas *mad jaiz* allows for more flexibility in its application (Muhammad et al., 2022). Efforts to apply technology in learning, such as the use of augmented reality focused on *mad* rules, are among the innovative approaches that help the younger generation understand the difference between these two types of *mad* more interactively (Pradhana et al., 2023).

The ability to recite Quranic verses with correct *tajwid* during prayer is also emphasized in several studies. Mastering *tajwid* aspects during worship ensures that the recitation is in line with the *sunnah* and reflects the teachings encouraged in Islam (Muhammad et al., 2022; Yafi et al., 2023). This is supported by the success of online and in-person *tajwid* classes, which have been shown to increase students' confidence in pronouncing *hijaiyah* letters and mastering basic *tajwid* rules (Suherman & Muthohirin, 2023; Yafi et al., 2023). The teaching process, which involves both traditional and digital approaches, has proven effective in improving recitation by incorporating *tajwid* knowledge into daily life (Suherman & Muthohirin, 2023; Firmansyah et al., 2022).

The teaching and practice of basic *tajwid* rules, including through *tahsin* and *tajwid* classes, have played a significant role in developing a quality Quranic generation (Laila et al., 2023). Teaching methodologies that involve improving the mastery of *hijaiyah* letters, using traditional teaching techniques, and integrating digital innovation have shown effectiveness in improving the ability to read the Quran with a focus on the accuracy of *tajwid* rules (Hasibuan, 2022; Pradhana et al., 2023; Yafi et al., 2023). Overall, this review emphasizes that understanding and practicing *tajwid* knowledge is not only a religious necessity but also a foundation for perfecting one's appreciation of the Quran's teachings.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this study are to identify:

  i. The level of basic *tajwid* mastery among Islamic Studies students at Politeknik Mersing.
 ii. Strategies to improve basic *tajwid* mastery among Islamic Studies students at Politeknik Mersing.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative research approach. The sample consists of 60 Muslim students from Politeknik Mersing, Johor. A purposive sampling method was used to select Muslim students studying at Politeknik Mersing who met the research criteria. The research instrument, a set of 5-point Likert scale questionnaires, was distributed randomly and analyzed descriptively. The questionnaire was divided into three main sections: Section A: Demographic Information, Section B: Level of Mastery and Practice of *Tajwid* in Quranic Recitation, and Section C: Strategies to Improve Basic *Tajwid* Mastery.

The items were developed in-house and reviewed by the Research, Innovation, and Commercialization Unit (UPIK). The level of mastery was measured based on the mean value. The mean score was interpreted into four levels

as suggested by Ngadiman et al. (2019): 1.00–1.99 (Weak), 2.00–2.99 (Low), 3.00–3.99 (Moderate), and 4.00–5.00 (High).

5. RESULTS

5.1 Respondent Demographics

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

Category		Percentage	Number of Respondents
Gender	Male	40%	24
	Female	60%	36
Department	JTMK (IT & Communication)	41.70%	9
	JP (Commerce)	36.70%	25
	JKE (Electrical Engineering)	21.70%	22
Frequency of recitation per week	Never	2.10%	1
	1–2 times a week	56.70%	34
	3–4 times a week	26.70%	16
	5–6 times a week	6.70%	4
	Every day	7.80%	5

Table 1 shows the respondent demographics. The majority were female students (60%), while male students made up 40%. The departments involved in this study were the Department of Commerce, the Department of Information and Communication Technology, and the Department of Electrical Engineering.

5.2 Level of Basic Tajwid Mastery Among Muslim Students at Politeknik Mersing

Table 2. Level of Tajwid Mastery

Item	Mean	Level
C1. I can identify the tajwid rules for nun saktah or tanwin in Quranic verses.	3.95	Moderate
C2. I can read letters that require nasalization (ghunnah).	4.05[2]	High
C3. I can differentiate between mad wajib and mad jaiz.	3.98[3]	Moderate
C4. I can read Quranic verses with the correct tajwid rules.	3.88	Moderate
C5. I always strive to learn tajwid to improve my Quranic recitation.	4.08[1]	High
C6. I read Quranic verses correctly during prayer.	3.87	Moderate

C7. I am confident that my pronunciation of the hijaiyah letters is correct.	3.77	Moderate
C8. I attend additional classes or lectures on tajwid, either online or in-person.	3.45	Moderate
C9. I can teach others basic tajwid rules.	3.05	Moderate
C10. I practice tajwid recitation in my daily life.	3.76	Moderate

Note: [1,2,3] The item with the highest mean score

Table 2 presents the analysis of basic *tajwid* mastery among Muslim students at Politeknik Mersing. Overall, the students' *tajwid* mastery is satisfactory. The item with the highest mean score was **C5**, indicating that students consistently strive to learn *tajwid* to improve their Quranic recitation. The second-highest mean was for **C2**, showing that students are able to read letters that require nasalization (*ghunnah*). The third was for **C3**, where students can differentiate between *mad wajib* and *mad jaiz*.

5.3 Strenghten Basic Tajwid Mastery Among Muslim Students at Politeknik Mersing.
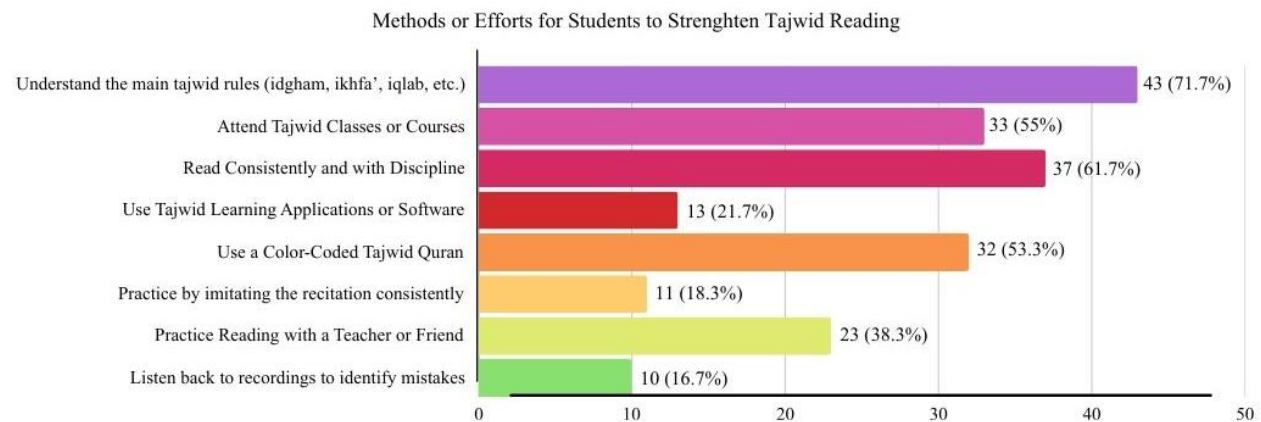

Figure 1. Student Strategy Choices

Figure 1 shows the analysis of strategies for improving basic *tajwid* mastery among Muslim students at Politeknik Mersing. The top strategy was understanding the main *tajwid* rules (71.7%), which forms the core of correct *tajwid* recitation. Additionally, students chose to read the Quran consistently and on a schedule (61.7%) to maintain their understanding and mastery. Attending *tajwid* classes or courses (55%) was also a popular choice for improving their grasp of basic *tajwid*.

6. DISCUSSION

The study findings show that students' skills in reciting the Qur'an with correct tajwid are satisfactory. They are able to identify the basic elements of proper Qur'anic recitation, such as letters that must be pronounced with nasalisation (ghunnah) and can distinguish between mad wajib and mad jaiz. Nevertheless, students demonstrate continuous effort to improve their mastery of tajwid, as they consistently strive to learn and practise. This finding is in line with Firmansyah et al. (2022), who emphasised that structured tajwid instruction can improve the accuracy of Qur'anic recitation.

The analysis for the second objective clearly indicates that the most dominant strategy (71.7%) is understanding the basic tajwid rules. This priority reflects that correct foundational knowledge of tajwid is the backbone of accurate Qur'anic recitation. This strategy is considered the most effective because proper cognitive preparation enables

individuals to read fluently, as supported by Firmansyah et al. (2022), who asserted that mastery of tajwid theory is a prerequisite for accurate recitation.

In addition, the second most prominent strategy is consistent recitation of the Qur'an (61.7%). This combined approach of practice and repetition has been proven effective in improving memory and reinforcing the application of tajwid rules. Zulkarnaen et al. (2023) explained that the quality of Qur'anic recitation can be enhanced and understanding of tajwid improved through appropriate learning methods such as the qiro'ati method (continuous recitation). Regular repeated practice builds muscle memory and forms automatic recitation skills. Students' preference for consistent Qur'anic recitation also highlights the effectiveness of practice-based approaches, supporting the findings of Yafi et al. (2023), which showed that daily application can increase students' confidence in recitation.

Furthermore, students also tend to seek guidance from teachers, as reflected in the third chosen strategy, which is attending tajwid classes or courses (55%). Direct learning and correction from instructors has a significant impact on acquiring accurate foundational knowledge of tajwid.

Overall, the data indicate that correct understanding of basic tajwid concepts, consistent practice, and structured guidance are important, comprehensive, and effective strategies in enhancing tajwid mastery.

7. CONCLUSION

Students still face challenges in achieving correct Qur'anic recitation with proper tajwid because the main difficulty they encounter is identifying the hijaiyah letters related to basic tajwid rules. However, overall, students demonstrate a good level of mastery. They believe that improving their basic tajwid proficiency can be achieved through a deep understanding of fundamental tajwid rules, followed by consistent recitation practice and participation in structured tajwid classes. These three top strategies are considered complementary and sequential, as students need to understand the methods theoretically, practise them regularly, and receive guidance as well as correction from teachers.

Therefore, this study proposes several strategies to assist students. The first is the establishment of regular Qur'an recitation or tajwid classes on a weekly or monthly basis to improve each student's Qur'anic recitation while ensuring that students consistently engage in recitation. In addition, this study also suggests that Politeknik Mersing implement tajwid-related programs to make it easier for students to improve their Qur'anic recitation. This would help enhance the quality of recitation and contribute to shaping better Muslims through improved Qur'anic reading.

The institution and lecturers may also organise additional courses or weekend classes to further improve students' mastery of tajwid knowledge. This study further suggests that institutions or lecturers should conduct face-to-face or online tajwid classes and monitor students' recitation during Qur'an reading sessions. Moreover, institutions or lecturers can provide more practical exercises and group recitation sessions so that students can listen to and correct one another's pronunciation. Additionally, the use of technology such as recording applications or interactive tajwid software can also help students develop a deeper understanding of basic tajwid courses.

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